



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

09/817,203

03/27/2001

Masumi Yoshino

205114US2

7892

22850

7590

07/20/2006

C. IRVIN MCCLELLAND
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

BLAIR, DOUGLAS B

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2142

DATE MAILED: 07/20/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/817,203	Applicant(s) YOSHINO ET AL.	
	Examiner Douglas B. Blair	Art Unit 2142	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 May 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5,9-26 and 30-38 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5,9-26 and 30-38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. The applicant's amendment has changed the scope of all of the independent claims. Specifically, the second part of the claimed form now only limits the user to inputting arbitrary information as opposed to arbitrary information with regard to the problem, as previously claimed. Therefore, the amended claims are now broader and have required further search and consideration and in the present case, another rejection as presented in this office action.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

3. Claims 1-5, 9-24, and 30-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,477,531 to Sullivan et al..

4. As to claim 1, Sullivan teaches an online support method that gives online support to eliminate a problem arising in a device, said online support method comprising the steps of: (a) providing a user of the device with a specific form that enables the user to input and transmit information with regard to the problem (col. 7, line 59-col. 8, line 4, see also Figure 6 for specific form and Figure 4 for flow chart); (b) providing the user of the device with support information, which is prepared in advance for elimination of the problem, prior to said step (a) a

Art Unit: 2142

wherein the specific form comprises a first part that asks the user to input first information generally required for analysis of the problem (Figure 6 and step 66 of Figure 4), and a second part that enables the user to input arbitrary information (Figure 6 and step 68 of Figure 4); (c) obtaining browsing record information, which represents a user's browsing record of the support information, in addition to information input into the specific form (col. 12, lines 8-18); and (d) transmitting the browsing record information and the information input into the specific forms to an online support operator (Figure 12).

5. As to claim 2, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein said step (b) provides the support information in response to each selecting instruction given by the user (col. 8, lines 5-47).

6. As to claim 3, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the specific form also asks the user to input information regarding the user (Figure 6, information about the user's problem is information regarding the user).

7. As to claim 4, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the specific form also asks the user to input information regarding an operation carried out by the user to eliminate the problem (col. 8, lines 5-64).

8. As to claim 5, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the specific form asks the user to input information regarding a user's browsing record of the support information provided in advance (col. 8, lines 48-63, it can only be assumed that by "asking" the applicant means automatically collecting because that is the only scenario described in the applicant's specification at paragraph 16).

Art Unit: 2142

9. As to claim 9, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the first information required to identify the device includes at least one of a model name of the device, an ID number allocated to the individual device, information that identifies a driver program for driving the device, and information that identifies an operating system on which the driver programs runs (Figures 5-6).

10. As to claim 10, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the second information required to specify the working status of the device includes at least one of information that identifies an application program activated on the device when the problem arises, information that identifies an application program used for driving the device and specifies data transmitted to the device, and information that specifies a communication environment of the device (Figures 5-6).

11. As to claim 11, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein the device comprises a storage unit configured to store specific information representing the working status of the device, and the second information required to specify the working status of the device comprises information that allows access to the storage unit (Figure 5-6).

12. As to claims 12-14, 16-23, and 30-35, they feature limitations from claims 1-4 and 6 and are rejected for the same reasons as claims 1-6.

13. As to claim 15, Sullivan teaches the online support method of claim 1, wherein said step (a) enables the specific form to be offered to the user without said step (b), in response to an instruction given by the user (Figures 5-6).

Art Unit: 2142

14. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

15. Claim 1-5, 9-24, and 30-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,691,159 to Grewal et al. in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,601,190 to Meyer et al. and U.S. Patent Number 6,412,073 to Rangan.

16. As to claim 1, Grewal teaches an online support method that gives online support to eliminate a problem arising in a device, said online support method comprising the steps of: providing a user of the device with a specific form that enables the user to input and transmit information with regard to the problem (col. 3, lines 32-45); and providing the user of the device with support information, which is prepared in advance for elimination of the problem, prior to the transmission (col. 3, lines 32-45); wherein the form comprises a part for the that asks the user to input first information required to identify the device and a part for second information required to specify the working status of the device and a part for enabling the user to input arbitrary information with regard to the problem (A user can select a device in Figure 4 and then specify working status and arbitrary information in the chat form of Figure 5); and obtaining browsing record information, which represents a user's browsing record of the support information, in addition to the information input into the specific form (Figure 4, the "Usual Destinations" box in the top right of the browser is a user browsing record.); however Grewal does not explicitly teach the one specific form that allows a user to input device identity,

Art Unit: 2142

working status and arbitrary information and Grewal does not explicitly teach the transmission of a browsing record with the information input into the form.

Meyer teaches a specific form comprising a form that allows a user to input device identity, working status, and arbitrary information (Figure 3 allows the user to input the arbitrary information. The email created in Figure 5 shows that the identity of the device and the working status of the device were added in the form of log files with the completion of the form).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Grewal regarding entering online support information with the teachings of Meyer regarding a single specific form because a single form provides the user with a simpler means for communicating problems (Meyer, col. 2, lines 17-26).

Rangan teaches the transmission of a browsing record (col. 8, lines 41-51).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Grewal regarding obtaining browsing records with the teachings of Rangan regarding the transmission of browsing records because user's browsing records are usually stored on a user's PC and such information would be also useful to an online support system.

17. As to claim 2, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the support information is provided in response to each selecting instruction given by the user (col. 3, lines 32-45).

18. As to claim 3, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the specific form also asks the user to input information regarding the individual user (col. 3, lines 15-26).

Art Unit: 2142

19. As to claim 4, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the specific form also asks the user to input information regarding an operation carried out by the user to eliminate the problem (Figure 6).

20. As to claim 5, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the specific form asks the user to input information regarding a user's browsing record of the support information provided in advance (Figure 4).

21. As to claim 9, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 8, wherein the first information required to identify the device includes a model name of the device (Figure 4).

22. As to claim 10, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 8, wherein the second information required to specify the working status of the device identifies an application program activated on the device when the problem arises (Figure 6).

23. As to claim 11, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 8, wherein the device comprises a storage unit in which information representing the working status of the device is stored and second information required to specify the working status of the device comprises information that allows an access to the storage unit (Figure 6).

24. As to claim 15, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the form is offered to a user without providing a result (col. 3, lines 53-65).

25. As to claim 24, Grewal teaches an online support method in accordance with claim 16, wherein the device carries out either of processing and generation of digital data, and the specific form asks the user to input at least information that is required to specify a result of either of the processing and the generation carried out by the device (Figure 6).

Art Unit: 2142

26. As to claims 12-14, 16-23, and 30-35, they feature limitations from claims 1-4 and 6 and are rejected for the same reasons as claims 1-6.

27. Claims 25-26 and 36-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,691,159 to Grewal et al. in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,601,190 to Meyer et al. and U.S. Patent Number 6,412,073 to Rangan in further view of U.S. Patent Number 6,119,247 to House et al..

28. As to claim 25 and 36, the Grewal-Meyer-Rangan combination teaches the method of claim 6, however the Grewal-Meyer-Rangan combination does not explicitly teach image data showing the inputs.

House teaches image data showing the inputs (col. 4, lines 28-44).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Grewal-Meyer-Rangan combination regarding online help with the teachings of House regarding image data because displaying the image helps a remote user debug a problem (House, col. 4, lines 28-44).

29. As to claims 26 and 37, the Grewal-Meyer-Rangan combination teaches the method of claim 6, however the Grewal-Meyer-Rangan combination does not explicitly teach image data showing the outputs.

House teaches image data showing the outputs (col. 4, lines 28-44).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Grewal-Meyer-Rangan combination regarding online help with the teachings of House regarding image data because displaying the image helps a remote user debug a problem (House, col. 4, lines 28-44).

Art Unit: 2142

30. Claim 38 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,691,159 to Grewal et al. in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,601,190 to Meyer et al. and U.S. Patent Number 6,412,073 to Rangan in further view of U.S. Patent Number 6,629,134 to Hayward et al..

31. Claims 38 features the same limitations as claim 1 with the addition of a display window that displays the working a status of a device. As pointed out previously, the Grewal-Meyer-Rangan combination makes obvious the features of claim 1; however the Grewal-Meyer-Rangan combination does not explicitly teach a display window that displays the working status of a device.

Hayward teaches a recording medium in which a program is recorded, wherein said program functions to drive a device and causes a link to an upper-layered online support Web page (col. 3, lines 54-64), which does not depend upon a model of the device nor a problem, out of support Web pages that provide a client with support information to eliminate a problem arising in the device, to be shown in at least one of a setting window that allows a user of the device to specify settings of the device and a display window that displays a working status of the device (col. 5, line 58-col. 6, line 57).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networkng art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of the Grewal-Meyer-Rangan combination regarding online support with the teachings of Harward regarding the display of a working status because a display provides better support than text alone.

Art Unit: 2142

32. Claims 25-26 and 36-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,477,531 to Sullivan et al. in further view of U.S. Patent Number 6,119,247 to House et al..

33. As to claim 25 and 36, Sullivan teaches the method of claim 24, however Sullivan does not explicitly teach image data showing the inputs.

House teaches image data showing the inputs (col. 4, lines 28-44).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Sullivan regarding online help with the teachings of House regarding image data because displaying the image helps a remote user debug a problem (House, col. 4, lines 28-44).

34. As to claims 26 and 37, Sullivan teaches the method of claim 24, however Sullivan does not explicitly teach image data showing the outputs.

House teaches image data showing the outputs (col. 4, lines 28-44).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Sullivan regarding online help with the teachings of House regarding image data because displaying the image helps a remote user debug a problem (House, col. 4, lines 28-44).

35. Claim 38 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,477,531 to Sullivan et al. in further view of U.S. Patent Number 6,629,134 to Hayward et al..

36. Claims 38 features the same limitations as claim 1 with the addition of a display window that displays the working a status of a device. As pointed out previously, Sullivan teaches the

Art Unit: 2142

features of claim 1; however Sullivan does not explicitly teach a display window that displays the working status of a device.

Hayward teaches a recording medium in which a program is recorded, wherein said program functions to drive a device and causes a link to an upper-layered online support Web page (col. 3, lines 54-64), which does not depend upon a model of the device nor a problem, out of support Web pages that provide a client with support information to eliminate a problem arising in the device, to be shown in at least one of a setting window that allows a user of the device to specify settings of the device and a display window that displays a working status of the device (col. 5, line 58-col. 6, line 57).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Computer Networking art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of Sullivan regarding online support with the teachings of Harward regarding the display of a working status because a display provides better support than text alone.

Response to Arguments

37. Applicant's arguments filed 5/1/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Generally speaking the applicant's invention is directed towards a series of webpages that collect information for troubleshooting purposes, including the user's browsing record. The applicant did not invent web forms and it must have been obvious on how to collect browsing records because the applicant does not bother to describe how it's done. Apparently, the applicant believes that the concept of collecting arbitrary "support information" via well known Internet programming techniques, such as forms, is novel. The Examiner disagrees.

Art Unit: 2142

38. First the applicant argues that Grewal does not teach “a first part that asks the user to input information generally required for analysis of the problem, and a second part that enables the user to input arbitrary information”. In response to this allegation, the Web page of Figure 4 is a first part of the form and the textual dialogue box 212 is a second part of a form. Nowhere has the applicant limited a form to a single website or CGI program.

39. The applicant then argues that Rangan does not teach “transmitting the browsing record information and the information input into the specific form to an online support operator”.

Rangan is relied upon to show that the uploading of browsing information is a well known concept but is not relied upon to show specifically online support information. One reading the applicant’s specification can only assume that the concept of uploading browsing records was obvious at the time of the invention because the applicant’s disclosure does not bother to describe how it’s done, only merely that it’s done (see paragraph 16). Since the applicant does not describe how it’s done, it can be only assumed that such a concept would have been well known and therefore obvious to use.

40. The applicant argues that there’s no motivation for combining the teachings of Grewal, Meyer, and Rangan because they are non-analogous art. However, this argument is based on the flawed premise that only concepts directly related to troubleshooting and online support are the only types of art that are obvious to combine. In other words the applicant is saying that two different kinds of data collection techniques cannot be combined just because they relate to different kinds of data. Grewal, Meyer, and Rangan are analogous are because they relate to data collection techniques of data via the Internet.

Art Unit: 2142

41. As to the applicant's statement that, "Grewal teaches away from using a form and discloses that forms are cumbersome, impersonal, and time consuming", this refers to one specific type of form and does not in anyway contradict the Examiner's interpretation of the claimed form as described above, that the teachings of Grewal can be considered a two part form even though they aren't on the same webpage.

42. The applicant further states that, "Meyer teaches away from service personnel speaking directly with customers because problems with the operation of computer are often complex", but it is unclear how the applicant thinks this statement relates to the claimed invention.

43. Finally, even if for arguments sake the elements as claimed by the applicant weren't obvious with respect to the cited references, the newly applied Sullivan reference anticipates the claims so Sullivan provides explicit motivation for combining all of the claimed elements.

Conclusion

44. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

Art Unit: 2142

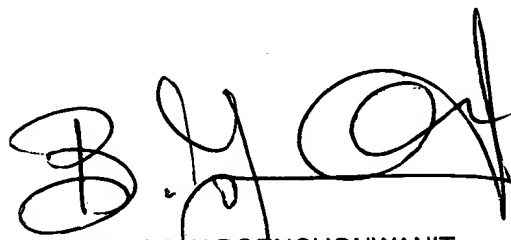
however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

45. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Douglas B. Blair whose telephone number is 571-272-3893. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30am-5pm Mon-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Caldwell can be reached on 571-272-3868. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Douglas Blair



BUNJOB JAROENCHONWANIT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER